14:International Bank S-5(1954)1955 MD1 Syria MD1

free of infestation, which will better be able to withstand competition on the world market and fetch higher prices. The Jezireh storage will make it unnecessary for farmers to dump their grain on the market immediately after the harvest, enable them to obtain credit on easier terms, and lower the cost of transport. All the facilities together will significantly reduce the substantial losses resulting at present from exposure to weather, infestation and rodents. The mission's estimate of the direct advantages resulting from the reduction of losses and the improvement in prices leads it to conclude that farmers and merchants would have ample incentive to utilize the storage facilities, even after taking into account the storage charges they would have to pay on the basis of operating costs and amortization.

We believe that the storage facilities, even when they have to be built by the government, should be operated by qualified private management under a long-term lease which would specify the maximum permissible storage charges. Farmers and merchants are unlikely to use facilities operated by the government itself.

Measures to improve the marketing of certain other products should also be taken. Large quantities of raw milk are now marketed in major cities without adequate quality control or veterinary inspection of dairy cattle. The UNICEF, concerned over milk supply for children, has apparently offered to provide equipment and assistance for the installation of a pasteurization plant in Damascus, and the mission urges that this project be carried out as promptly as possible. A similiar plant may be feasible for Aleppo. It is important that some control be established also over the source of supply. Periodic tuberculin and blood agglutination tests for the diagnosis of tuberculosis and brucellosis in dairy animals might, for example, be initiated. In Aleppo, where many dairy cows are kept in the city under unsanitary conditions which produce a high incidence of tuberculosis, the removal of dairy cattle to locations outside the city is strongly recommended.

Improvements in public abattoirs would also bring about better prices for producers and provide a better quality meat for the consumer. Existing abattoirs are for the most part old, unhygienic and possess no means for salvaging many of the valuable by-products of slaughtering which could be used for the manufacture of fertilizers, chemicals and drugs. While complete renovation is not feasible in the immediate future, the mission suggests that a start be made by erecting a modern abattoir in Damascus at an estimated cost of £S 600,000.

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East
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248 433 of cultivation. Syrian cotton is a 'Lone Star' medium-staple variety and is of better quality than is needed for some locally-made clothes, which accounts for the fact that Syria both exports and imports cotton. There is still a long way to go before the country's cotton cultivation is as efficient as in Egypt or the Sudan, but cotton has become Syria's most important export commodity and the cotton acreage increased by no less than 800 per cent between 1945 and 1951, compared with an increase of 60 per cent and 70 per cent in Egypt and the Sudan.

241 433 Both 1951 and 1952 were bad years for olives; in the north, thousands of trees have been blighted by frost. Syria produces good fruit, especially in the oasis of Damascus, and peaches, apples, figs, plums, pears, grapes, apricots, and pistachio nuts are all grown. The most prolific vegetable crops are lentils, beans, and peas. The area under rice has been reduced by drainage schemes and Syria does not grow enough for her own needs. The famous tobacco of Latakia is grown under a monopoly which has recently been transferred from the concessionary company to the state. Silk and hemp are also cultivated and a start has been made in growing beet for the Homs sugar refinery.

231 439 234 Nearly 3 million sheep are estimated to graze in Syria with goats numbering over a million. Over 7,000 tons a year of coarse wool are exported, including about 2,000 tons a year suitable for rug-making. Cattle are of two types and, in 1950, numbered about 429,000.[1] Yoghurt and cheese and milk are consumed within the country. It is estimated that there are still over 72,000 camels in Syria and they are an important part of nomad economy. The Syrian horse and mule are still bred but in declining numbers.

185 The forests of Syria, as of the Mediterranean in general, are a survival from a period of greater rainfall coeval with the last glacial period of northern Europe. The woodcutter and the goat, war and erosion have taken their toll and trees are no longer an important part of Syrian wealth. An effort at re-afforestation is being made, and there is also a project to produce reeds for paper-making on the banks of the Euphrates.

Industry and Commerce[2]

377 In 1951 the output of electric energy was over 86 million kilowatt hours used mostly in Aleppo and Damascus. New

[1] *Statistical Abstract of Syria, 1951–2* (Damascus, 1952).
[2] For further details, see UN, Dept. of Economic Affairs, *Review of Economic Conditions in the Middle East, 1951–2*.

widely used, chiefly in the form of *leban*, a fermented milk product, cheese or butter. About 60 to 70 per cent of the milk is derived from sheep; the remainder, from cattle or goats. The Juliana breed of cattle and a special breed of "Damascus goat" are raised in most regions and are noteworthy as milk producers. Fowl and eggs are usually plentiful, but the consumption of meat is normally low, especially in the rural areas. Mutton is the principal meat, although the flesh of cattle, goats and camels is also utilized. Fish are valuable as a source of protein in the Euphrates and the Khabour river basins and along the coast; they are seldom available in other regions.

The Bedouin live chiefly on milk products made from the milk of their flocks, augmented by cereals and, occasionally, dates. Meat is often more of a luxury among the nomads than among the villagers. The average Bedouin diet is usually sparse and monotonous.

Housing

Life in rural Syria centers in the villages, which are self-contained social units. Structurally, they are compact, with the houses attached, and built in such a manner that a continuous windowless wall faces the street. Mud brick or adobe is the predominating building material, although stone is sometimes employed in the highland areas. The houses may consist of one or several rooms, which almost invariably open into a central compound. Separate shelters for storage and for the livestock may line the sides of the courtyards, but in the poorer villages the domestic animals are frequently housed with the family, at least during the winter months. The roofs are typically flat, made of rolled earth overlaid on poles and reeds or of thatch. Beehive-type houses with domed or conical roofs, however, are a characteristic feature of the treeless plains in Latakia, Aleppo and Al Jazira provinces. Dwellings built partially underground, often simulating caves, are encountered in some mountain villages in Latakia. Considerable

63:Simmons et al G-5 (1941-1951) 1954
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istry of Agriculture, and all meats offered for sale must carry an official stamp of approval. Few controls exist over the production of milk, however, except in some of the larger cities. Cow's or goat's milk is normally sold in bulk and peddled in donkey carts. Herds of goats are frequently driven through the streets, the animals being milked while the customer waits. The dairies and the herds which supply milk to the cities of Damascus and Aleppo are subject to inspection by the municipal veterinarians. Samples collected from restaurants and other food establishments may also be submitted to the food control laboratories of the Ministry of Health for bacteriologic examination. There are no modern facilities for pasteurization. A few dealers in Damascus retail bottled milk which has been pasteurized by submersion in boiling water baths. Little milk is consumed raw, since boiling is the general practice, but butter and cheese are frequent sources of infection. Brucellosis is enzootic among both goats and cattle, tuberculosis among the cattle.

HEALTH SERVICES AND MEDICAL FACILITIES

Health Organizations

The present health organization of the Syrian government has evolved since 1943, when the republic was established. The health and the medical services are administered by the Ministry of Health (and Public Assistance), with headquarters in Damascus. Executive authority resides in the Minister, who is advised on matters of policy by a Supreme Public Health Council. He is assisted by a Director General of Health, who, in turn, is advised by a Public Health Consultation Council made up of experts in representative technical fields. The functions of the Ministry are discharged through 7 constituent departments —public health affairs, public health laboratories, hospitals and clinics, inspections, pharmaceutical affairs, supplies and administration and records.

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